

7 Servicemen face secrets charges

By GUY RAIS

SEVEN young servicemen stationed in Cyprus, five from the Royal Air Force and two from the Army, were flown into Britain early yesterday and appeared at Bow Street Magistrates' Court charged under the Official Secrets Act.

Six were charged with communicating information useful to an enemy, and the seventh with endangering the safety of information in his care.

All were remanded in custody until next Thursday. The seven, aged between 20 and 26, were dressed in civilian clothes. Some carried holdalls. They remained silent during the two-minute hearing. There was no application for bail, and reporting restrictions were not lifted.

They were charged at Bow Street half an hour before appearing before the stipendiary magistrate, Mr William Robins.

The seven are: Senior Aircraftman Geoffrey Raymond Jones, 20, Adam Lightowler, 21, Wayne Christopher Kriehn, 20, Christopher Michael Payne, 21, Gwladys Reginald Owen, 21, and Signalman Martin Paul Tuffy, 22, and David Hardman, 26, both of the Royal Corps of Signals.

All are stationed at R.A.F. Fiskopi and R.A.F. Akrotiri, the two main British bases in Cyprus.

Similar charge

Jones, Lightowler, Kriehn, Payne and Owen are each charged under Section 1 (1) (c) of the Official Secrets Act 1911 that "between Nov. 1 1983 and Feb. 7, 1984, within the jurisdiction of the Central Criminal Court, for a purpose prejudicial to the safety or interests of the State, they communicated to another person information which was calculated to be, or might have been, or was intended to be, directly or indirectly useful to an enemy."

Tuffy faces a similar charge but his alleged offence refers to "a day between Jan. 9 and Feb. 7, 1984."

Hardman is charged under Section 2 (1) (c) of the Act that "between July 1, 1982 and Aug. 24, 1982, within the jurisdiction of the Central Criminal Court, being a person who had in his possession or control information which he had obtained owing to his position as a person who held office under Her Majesty, failed to take reasonable care, or so conducted himself, as to endanger the safety of that information."